

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF INDIA

been made a party cry to divert attention from wider issues. The core of the Muslim League consists of landlords and others who are afraid of the Congress agrarian legislation, but today, because they must have a Muslim following in order to face the Congress—the mass contact development frightened them—they are faced with an inner contradiction. They have had to accept the basis of complete independence and a vague economic programme, but they have eschewed any democratic elections to their higher bodies or the establishment of primary committees. The Muslim League may very well die as the result of its contradictions.

But the Congress has its contradictions too. If the Right should attack the development of mass movements among the peasants and workers it might win the Muslim top layer, parallel to the rather Fascist elements among the Hindus, but, if they push forward with their agrarian programme and the policy of anti-imperialism they will win the masses and defeat communalism. So far my Muslim Socialist, of course, regrets conversations with communal leaders as a retrograde step.

In regard to the question of riots, he went on to say that in most Indian cities there is a considerable "*Lumpenprole-tariat*"—a floating population of unemployed illiterate and backward elements, merging into the criminal class. This latter—the *goondas*—includes dope-peddlers, inveterate drunkards and procurers. The *goondas* are hooligans, India's equivalent to gunmen. They are akin to the type of people who tended to drift to Oswald Mosley in London and join the ranks of the blackshirts. No political movement has appealed to them or won them. On the other hand, there are the parasitic elements—very vocal—concerned with jobbery. It is worth noting that a great deal of the Hindu-Muslim quarrel is over jobs; it does not touch the masses